



# Valley Volunteer



Paint Valley and East CLC high school students build shelves.

## Why Volunteers Matter

Volunteers are woven into the complex tapestry that is Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) and its three major partners: Conservancy for CVNP (Conservancy), Countryside Conservancy, and Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad (CVSR). Employees who serve beside these dedicated individuals see firsthand why volunteers matter.

*Volunteers bring enthusiasm to their work. Their passion and joy remind us every day that even the little details matter!*  
— **Maureen Reich, Conservancy**

*The value of volunteers is priceless. CVSR volunteers share their expertise and time to help in every area of our operation. It is because of volunteers that we are able to present quality programs.* — **Sherri Lemley, CVSR**

*Working with citizen science volunteers takes me to new and unexpected roles in natural resource management. My volunteers amaze me as they generate ideas and network*

*to promote the conservation of park resources. They teach me more than I can teach them!* — **Meg Plona, CVNP**

*It can be rough starting your Saturday at 6 a.m., but the amazing volunteers who help set-up the farmers' market at Howe Meadow make it so much easier. Their enthusiasm, commitment, and hard work help to kick the market off to a great start every week.*  
— **Erin Molnar, Countryside Conservancy**

*Volunteers make possible the things that we as park staff could only dream about accomplishing ourselves. They make working at Cuyahoga Valley truly a pleasure and make visiting national parks an experience like no other.*  
— **Brady Bourquin, CVNP**

*Volunteers are a huge help at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center. We rely on them for so many things: from performing service projects on campus and teaching children about the wonders of nature to helping with administrative tasks.* — **Connie Dages, Conservancy**

*Often I find myself caught up in day-to-day operations. Seeing volunteers' enjoyment and sense of pride reminds me of why I wanted a job with this agency.* — **Justin Pugh, CVNP**

*Volunteers allow our habitat restoration program to succeed, period. Without the thousands of individuals who contribute thousands of hours, we could not achieve nearly as much or do it as well.* — **Andrew Bishop, CVNP**



Park Ranger Justin Pugh.



Biologist Meg Plona and Citizen Scientist Jim Bennett monitor a stream.





National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

## Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Mailing Address  
15610 Vaughn Road  
Brecksville, OH 44141  
330-657-2296

[volunteer@forcvnp.org](mailto:volunteer@forcvnp.org)  
[www.nps.gov/cuva](http://www.nps.gov/cuva)  
[www.conservancyforcvnp.org](http://www.conservancyforcvnp.org)

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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Cuyahoga Valley National Park's (CVNP) volunteer program is co-managed by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Other primary partners include the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad and the Countryside Conservancy. Together, we accomplish park and partner goals through mutually beneficial volunteer experiences and engage people in the park, building a community of park stewards.

Currently about 6,300 Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs) donate nearly 209,000 hours assisting in over 100 different roles. We rely on these dedicated people to provide the highest level of quality services to our visitors and to help us protect America's heritage.



NPS/JOHN FITZPATRICK



## What's Next for the Trail Plan?

CVNP's new Trail Management Plan will guide the expansion, restoration, operation, and use of our trail system over the next 15 years. Even before the plan was finalized in December 2013, people have been wondering about the next steps. Here's the scoop!

In 2014 planning begins on four trail projects. Ira River Trail will head east from the trailhead parking lot and provide views of the Cuyahoga. East Rim Trail, the park's first for off-road bikes, is in the works. We are creating a trail connection between the Hines Hill campus and Stanford House. Last, we are extending the lower Furnace Run Trail, making a loop back to Everett Covered Bridge. Our focus this year is on flagging the routes and complying with resource protection laws. If all goes smoothly, construction should begin in 2015.

Over the next few years, we also have two major projects to improve

accessibility for people with disabilities and the overall visitor experience. First, CVNP will be replacing all wayside exhibits along the Towpath Trail. Expect dynamic new stories, hands-on features, audio descriptions, and things we have yet to dream. Second, we plan to update trail maps and signs with more detailed accessibility information.

This is a tall order that we cannot accomplish alone. We need community support. Volunteers to take measurements in the field. Volunteers to comment on our drafts, online or in focus groups. Volunteers with gloves and hand tools. Could this be you?

These efforts are part of the TRAILS FOREVER mission to create great trails for all time, for all people.



TRAILS FOREVER

Cuyahoga Valley National Park encompasses 33,000 acres along the Cuyahoga River between Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. Managed by the National Park Service, CVNP combines cultural, historical, recreational, and natural activities in one setting.



Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists.

## Certified Volunteer Naturalists

by Stacey Heffernan, Conservancy

The Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program promotes citizen stewardship of Ohio's natural resources through science-based education and community service. It is currently in 13 counties. The Cuyahoga Valley chapter began in 2010 and is a partnership between Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the National Park Service, and the Ohio State Extension Office of Summit County. This spring we welcome our fifth class for a rigorous, yet fun, 40-hour training.

To date, nearly 100 participants have waded through wetlands, explored soil horizons, searched for salamanders, and committed to sharing their love of the natural world with park visitors. Besides the interactive, hands-on learning, participants often comment that meeting like-minded people is one of the most rewarding aspects of the program. Together, Cuyahoga Valley OCVN'ers have amassed over 5,000 hours.

VIP Christine Wheeler sums up the experience by describing how a team of five created the new *Considering Climate Change Quest*, a self-guided rhyming adventure that departs from Hunt House. "We met through the OCVN program and enjoy learning and getting outside in natural settings. We have maintained our friendship long after the formal OCVN training ended, and have shared our enthusiasm for the national park by working together on the climate change quest. Hopefully, our effort will inspire others to get out in the park and learn while having fun!"

## CVSR VIPs Keep Things Rolling

by Kelly Steele-Moore, CVSR

Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad (CVSR) is one of the oldest, longest, and most scenic excursion railways in the country, and volunteers are a vital element in overall operations. In 2013, train VIPs donated almost 82,000 hours, making our rides through the Cuyahoga Valley memorable.

2014 promises to be another exciting year! Volunteers will be onboard to assist with unique programs that include dinner trains, murder mysteries (one offers an overnight at the Horseshoe Casino), afternoon teas with historical guests, and summer camps with Cleveland's Talespinners Children's Theater. A Day Out With Thomas™ celebrates its 18th year at CVNP! For more information about volunteer opportunities, visit [www.CVSR.com](http://www.CVSR.com).

## Gain Practical Experience with an Internship

by VIP Writer Marybeth Cieplinski

Throughout the year, a variety of intern positions are available for college students. You can work in marketing/graphic design, public relations, environmental education, wildlife biology, water quality, visitor center operations, accessibility for visitors with disabilities, trail maintenance, or summer camp counseling—just to name a few areas.

I am a graduate student in the North East Ohio Master of Fine Arts program through Kent State University, and I joined the interpretive media team last June as a writer intern. Applying was such an easy process, and the assignments have been very satisfying. I handle many different types of writing that I would never have experienced anywhere else, plus I feel like I am making a difference. It has been a perfect fit for me.

To learn more about internships in your national park, visit [www.nps.gov/cuva/supportyourpark/internships.htm](http://www.nps.gov/cuva/supportyourpark/internships.htm).



Interns Rachel Ryan (left) and Beth Wallace electrofishing.





*New Albany students plant garden.*

## Youth Create Butterfly Garden

In September 2013, more than 300 eighth grade students and teachers from New Albany Middle School participated in a butterfly garden service learning project at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center. Each morning, they traveled two hours from the Columbus area and arrived with a can-do attitude.

The students began by preparing the 5,000-square-foot garden. It took two days to remove existing grass and spread fresh topsoil. On the third day, the eighth graders planted nearly 2,000

native grasses and wildflowers! These were cultivated in CVNP's native plant nursery from seeds collected by staff and volunteers.

This is the second large-scale butterfly garden that youth volunteers have installed at CVEEC. In time, the new butterfly garden will attract butterflies and other pollinating insects. This project owes much of its success to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative which funded staff and supplies.



©RICK MCMEECHAN

## Speaker's Bureau VIPs Speak Up!

Presenting a program takes special skills. Our small, dedicated team of Speaker's Bureau volunteers has perfected the art, serving 450 people in 2013. Traveling into local communities, they offer groups, from scouts to seniors, a taste of the CVNP experience. Their program explores how the power of water shaped the Cuyahoga Valley physically, economically, and culturally. Through wildlife pelts and skulls, historic photos, and a slideshow, the volunteers encourage stewardship of this great national resource. Do you want to bring our park to the people?

To become a presenter or to request a presentation, contact Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Walters at 330-657-2142 or [jwalters@forcvnp.org](mailto:jwalters@forcvnp.org).

## Canal Exploration Center Opens

Get the inside scoop on the park's newest attraction, Canal Exploration Center, opening May 17, 2014. Once used as a tavern, a general store, and a residence, this historic building now features in-depth, interactive exhibits for children and adults.

Would you like to deepen and share your knowledge of Ohio's canal heritage? Learn to use touchscreens to navigate a canal boat through a lock, explore the nation's canal system, or eavesdrop on Canal Chat conversations. Don a historic costume and bring this lesser-known era to life. Debate the meaning of progress! Find out how topics such as immigration, paying for public works projects, and who wins in a free market economy were just as hot over 150 years ago. To become a Canal Explorer, contact the volunteer office for current needs and the next training dates.

## Know the Hazards

Would you know what to do if weed killer sprays in your face or cleaning solvent splashes on your hands?

Everyone has the right to know what chemicals are used in their workplace—and what to do if you are exposed. Be sure that you can quickly locate your jobsite's bright binder of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) in an emergency. These identify each chemical and its hazards, and describe proper first aid and clean up measures. Take the SDS along if you need medical treatment. If you need to use a chemical, review the SDS beforehand to select personal protective equipment.



*VIP Larry Hahn.*

VIP Larry Hahn, a retiree with experience managing industrial chemicals, is assisting Safety Officer Joyce Jordan in updating over 30 SDS binders here at CVNP. It's a herculean task, but one that's critical for park safety.

# Volunteer Training & Enrichment

For detailed information about volunteer training, visit [www.nps.gov/cuva](http://www.nps.gov/cuva) and click "Volunteer/Volunteer Training." The park's Volunteer Handbook lists what courses are required by volunteer position. Registration is required three business days before class, except for the Enrichment Series. Contact 330-657-2299 or [volunteer@forcvnp.org](mailto:volunteer@forcvnp.org).

## Training in Interpretation

**Foundations of Interpretation** provides the philosophical groundwork for why we do interpretation, what interpretation is, and how interpretation works to form personal connections between the meanings of the resource and the interests of the audience. This is a prerequisite for other interpretation classes. It is offered multiple times in the spring. These classes are also available online.

**Informal Visitor Contacts** captures the spontaneous types of interactions interpreters have with visitors, whether informational or interpretive. It is offered multiple times in the spring. These classes are also available online.

## First Aid Training and CPR Classes

Two levels of CPR and First Aid training are available to volunteers. Some positions may require volunteers to respond to medical emergencies until professional help arrives. Both classes include basic First Aid and blood-borne pathogens safety. First Responder is the basic class teaching and encouraging you to act by providing hands-only CPR. The more comprehensive CPR/AED/First Aid class includes full CPR and AED use. Certifications are good for two years. An American Red Cross card is available for a fee.

### First Responder

Sundays, April 13 or June 1,  
or Saturday, November 2  
8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### CPR/AED/First Aid

Saturdays, April 19 or May 31,  
or Sunday, November 24  
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

## Enrichment Series

On the second Tuesday of every month, the Volunteer Enrichment Series provides timely information and training that is useful for all volunteers. Meet at Happy Days Lodge for refreshments at 6:30 p.m. and a lecture from 7 - 8 p.m., unless otherwise noted. On June 10, December 9, and April 14 (2015) refreshments begin at 6 p.m. and are followed by a volunteer award presentation prior to the lecture. Visit [www.nps.gov/cuva](http://www.nps.gov/cuva) and click "Volunteer" to learn about upcoming topics and speakers.

## Volunteer Orientation

This orientation provides an overview of the NPS, CVNP, park partners, and the Volunteers-in-Parks Program. Prospective volunteers can pick up resources on how to get involved. New volunteers are required to attend within their first six months.

Thursdays, May 1 or July 17  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturdays, January 10 or March 7 (2015)  
10 a.m. - noon



Interns Kati McArdle and Dan Oprisch  
earned advanced certificates.

## Advanced Certificates in Interpretation

Additional courses can give you more tools to effectively provide interpretive services to park visitors. You can earn advanced certificates by working with local coaches.

**Informal Visitor Contacts** teaches participants how to read verbal and non-verbal cues in order to provide park visitors with impromptu opportunities to form personal connections with the park.

**Interpretive Talk** gives you the tools to design an interpretive talk that facilitates personal connections with the park in a more structured manner.

**Conducted Activities** explores how to develop an experience which moves visitors physically through the park, transitioning from one stop to another.

There are several park rangers who can coach you through the program. For more information, contact Pamela Machuga at 330-657-1914 or [pam\\_machuga@nps.gov](mailto:pam_machuga@nps.gov).





# Milestones & Transitions

## Parkwide Volunteer Picnic

The 2014 Parkwide Volunteer Picnic will be held on Friday, August 15 from 6 - 9 p.m. Invitations will be sent to volunteers with 40 or more annual service hours.



*VIP Dave Burgan in action.*

## VIP Dave Burgan's Impact as Adopt-a-Trail Chair

We want to acknowledge a milestone in the Adopt-a-Trail program. VIP Dave Burgan is passing the torch to a new committee chair. Adopt-a-Trail simply would not be what it is without Dave's leadership and vision. He co-founded the program with National Park Service staff in 2001.

As chair, Dave organized 12 National Trails Day events, which sometimes included a workshop for new volunteers. He spearheaded crew leadership development: recruiting new volunteers, co-creating the Adopt-a-Trail Manual, and organizing the annual meeting and safety training. Dave championed the creation of a quarterly schedule of trail sweeps, kept records, and served as the liaison between Trails and Grounds

Supervisor Bill Zimmer and the crew leaders. His wife Cindy, friend Si Loesch, and the Adopt-a-Trail committee often worked at Dave's side.

A whole-hearted thanks for serving as chair since the very beginning! Dave will continue as crew leader for the Plateau Trail.

## Milestone Awards

We are proud to recognize the following volunteers for reaching these milestones in their cumulative hours of service during 2013.

**1,000 hours:** Lee Adams, Betsy Banks, Jim Carsten, Kay Clark, Joe DeAngelis, Tom DiNardo, Dick Dolejs, Evelyn Dolejs, Joan Dorsey, Nancy Ellison, Don Evans, Ann Findlan, Gerry Findlan, Holly Glock, Susan Harb, Chuck Hass, Thomas Heffke, Charles Hoff, Steve Hunsicker, Jeff Hyde, Terry Igneczi, Jim Jorgenson, Kevin Kipp, Michael Kosmyna, Tom Kovach, Dave Lenigan, Robert Maro, Joseph Mate, Jerry McFadden, Elaine Murtaugh, Geoffrey Neeson, Douglas Pearson, James G. Roetzel, James Roszak, Rita Sappenfield, Steve Schadelbauer, John Schmitt, Robert Schneider, George Sillett, Barb Steinbrick, Gene Stepanik, Mark Tobin, Kevin Tuttle, Phil Urbank, Ronda Urbank, and Dorothy Wisniewski

**2,000 hours:** Trent Albert, Lyle Barton, Bernie Charnas, Dennis Conrad, Tom Gaumer, Gary Graham, Gordon Hartschuh, Don Hrdlicka, David Johnson, Robin Kirk, BettyLee Krol, Miriam Pendleton, Mary Anne Romito, Dennis Simms, Gus Ubaldi, Jack Underwood, Sean Veney, Fredrick Wahl, and Paul Wokoun

**3,000 hours:** Cindy Burgan, Joe Deucher, Joan Greenberg, David Kopkas, Kurt Korfhage, Craig Schneider, Duane Severt, Dennis Simms, Gary Spencer, Mary Spencer, and Jack Williams

**4,000 hours:** George Bleyle, Tom Johnston, Jeff Kirkwood, and David Young

**5,000 hours:** John Kropf

## VIP Awards

### George and Helen Hartzog Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service

recognize the efforts of exceptional individual volunteers and groups in the National Park Service. The 2013 group nominees are Cycling Schools, Habitat Restoration Crew, Rail Rovers, and Trailblazers. The 2013 individual nominees are Tom Fritsch, Henry Gulich, Elaine Murtaugh, Ruth Ottiger, John Vander Kooi, and Laurie Toth.

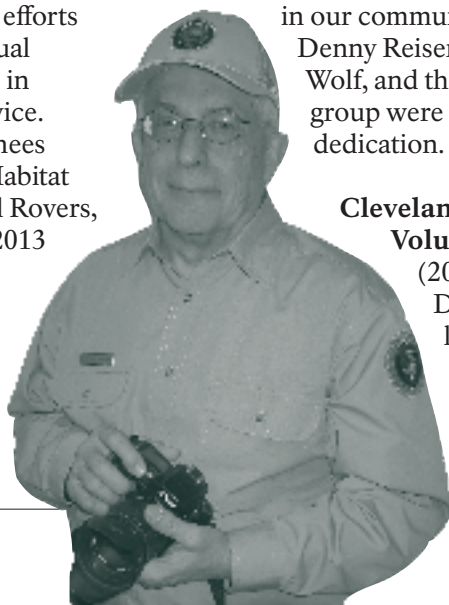
### United Way Volunteer Celebration

honors the spirit of volunteerism in our community. In April 2014, Denny Reiser, Sue Simenc, Sue Wolf, and the Student Explorers group were spotlighted for their dedication.

### Cleveland Indians

#### Volunteer of the Year

(2013) was awarded to David Kopkas who logged in the most volunteer hours on the contest website.



*VIP Denny Reiser.*  
NPS/LYNETTE SPRAGUE-FALK

## Recognizing Volunteer Groups

We thank the following groups for their volunteer service in 2013:

### Youth

Archbishop Hoban High School  
BBYO-Ohio Northern Region  
Boy Scout Troops 18, 28, 575, and 620  
Bridges Learning Center  
Buchtel Community Learning Center  
Case Western Reserve University  
Coventry Middle School  
Cub Scout Packs 28, 252, and 3105  
Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy  
Eagle Scout Dylan Montgomery,  
Troop 253  
Eagle Scout Josh Morrison, Troop 511  
Eagle Scout Alex Mullen, Troop 777  
Eagle Scout Daniel Sheppard,  
Troop 620  
Eagle Scout Andy Warner, Troop 380  
Eagle Scout John Wilson, Troop 777  
East Community Learning Center  
Ginn Academy  
Girl Scout Troops 149 and 765  
Groundworks Cincinnati-Mill Creek  
Help 2 Others, City of Lakewood  
Hiram College Alumni  
Independence High School  
Kent State University  
Laurel School  
Maple Heights High School

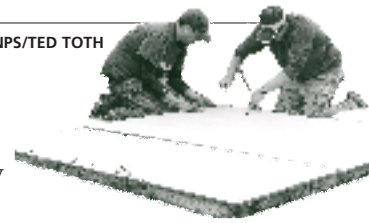
Menlo Park Academy  
National Inventors Hall of Fame  
School...Center for STEM Learning®  
Newbury Junior High School  
New Albany Middle School  
Open Doors Academy  
Paint Valley High School  
Seton Catholic School  
Sigma Phi Epsilon, Case Western  
Reserve University  
Spring Garden Waldorf School  
St. Hilary School  
St. Jude's Episcopal Church  
Youth Group  
St. Sebastian Catholic School  
St. Vincent Catholic School  
University of Akron  
University School  
Upward Bound, Stark State College  
Upward Bound Classic,  
University of Akron  
Woodridge Middle School

### Corporate/Adult:

Air Force Recruiters  
Akron Beacon Journal  
Bank of America  
Buckeye Trail Association  
Cisco Systems, Inc.

Cuyahoga Valley  
Trails Council  
Deloitte  
Ernst & Young LLP  
FedEx  
First Congregational  
Church of Hudson  
Fleet Feet Sports Northfield  
Fox Sports Ohio  
GOJO Industries  
Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores  
KeyBank, Inc.  
L'Oreal  
Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry  
Medina County Ohio  
Horseman's Council  
N.E. Ohio Orienteering Club  
The North Face-Woodmere  
Ohio Climbers Coalition  
PPG Industries  
Science Applications  
International Corp (SAIC)  
Selman & Company  
SSP Fittings Corporation  
Summa Health System  
Time Warner Cable  
United Health Group  
U.S. Coast Guard, Cleveland Area  
Chief Petty Officers Association  
Whole Foods Market

NPS/TED TOTTH



COURTESY/CHRISTINA WARNER

Eagle Scout Andy Warner, left, builds steps.



NPS/TED TOTTH

Deloitte improves CVEEC garden area.





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## Make a Difference!

Do you want to try something new? To find a list of current volunteer opportunities, visit [www.nps.gov/cuva](http://www.nps.gov/cuva) and click "Volunteer." Support educational programs, visitor services, natural resource monitoring, habitat restoration, trail maintenance, and administration. There are drop-in, seasonal, and year-round opportunities. Many of our ongoing volunteer positions have limited recruitment periods, so check our website regularly or sign up there to receive the quarterly *Volunteer Opportunities E-News*.

## 2014 Days of Service

Individuals, youth groups, and corporate groups are all invited to lend a hand to improve their national park alongside hundreds of other passionate volunteers. Each day includes one or more family-friendly projects (minimum ages vary). Locations will be given upon registration. 10 - 1 p.m. For details visit [www.nps.gov/cuva](http://www.nps.gov/cuva) and click "Volunteer" or contact the volunteer office at 330-657-2299.

### Earth Day

Saturday, April 19

### RiverDay

Saturday, May 17

### National Trails Day

Saturday, June 7

### National Public Lands Day

Saturday, September 27

### Make a Difference Day

Saturday, October 25



National Trails Day 2013.

## Positive Impacts

Days of Service are great opportunities for new and recurring volunteers alike to show their appreciation and make a difference in Cuyahoga Valley National Park. A record-breaking 585 individuals participated in 2013.

Hard-working groups and individuals (as well as the NPS and Conservancy staff who helped plan and lead these events) made enduring improvements to park resources. Over 1,230 native trees and shrubs and 1,300 native wildflowers were planted; 9 truckloads of trash, recycling, and scrap metal were removed and disposed of properly; more than 100 tires were removed and recycled; 22 miles of trails were improved; and 14 acres of native habitat were restored.

Become a park steward by joining us in 2014. Help plant more trees and wildflowers, remove more invasive plants and trash, and keep more miles of trail in tip-top shape. It's a great way to bond with those you bring along and to meet like-minded people.

**For a large-type version of this newsletter, call 440-546-5991**